

Saturday



Magazine.

No. 559.

MARCH

20TH, 1841.

PRICE
ONE PENNY.



RESIGNATION, BY FLAXMAN

JOHN FLAXMAN AND HIS WORKS.

I.

First, elder Sculpture taught her sister art
Correct design, where great ideas shone,
And in the secret trace expression spoke:
Taught her the graceful attitude; the turn,
And beauteous airs of head; the native act,
Or bold, or easy; and, cast free behind,
The swelling mantle's well-adjusted flow.—THOMSON

WE are told that the father of JOHN FLAXMAN was a sculptor, or rather a "moulder of figures," and that, when he was pursuing his vocation in the city of York, the subject of this narrative was born on the 6th of July, 1755. When only six months old, the younger John, who was named after his father, was removed to London, together with his brother William, who was afterwards eminent for his skill in carving wood. The elder Flaxman was skilful and industrious in his business: he worked for sculptors who employed him, and likewise kept a shop in the Strand, for the sale of plaster figures.

The younger Flaxman was slightly deformed from his birth, and in his earliest years of a weak and ailing constitution; but his temper was quiet, and his mind enthusiastic. Hence he felt a propensity to shun the society of boys of his own age, and to seek amusements for himself. These amusements were naturally of a mental description. At the counter of his father's shop, he usually sat, during the day, sometimes engaged in reading; at other times in drawing in black chalk. By his grave, but cheerful deportment; by his desire for knowledge, and his love of drawing, he attracted the notice of people who frequented his father's shop. They saw that he was no common child;—that, in these tender years, he took delight in poets, sculptors, and heroes;—that he not only copied figures around him, but that he also referred at once for the antique to Homer, and attempted to think and design for himself.

At the age of from five to seven years he seems to have shown a decided predilection for everything which, in any way, exhibited a sculptured device. He was fond of examining the seals of every watch he saw, and endeavoured to obtain an impression of any one which pleased him. When he was reminded of this, after he had become eminent in his art, he gravely observed that "we are never too young to learn what is useful, or too old to grow wise and good."

In boyhood he was very much noticed and befriended by the Rev. Mr. Mathew, who found in him a natural courtesy and deference to others, such as he evinced towards mankind at large, when, in after days, his fame had spread far and wide. His hours were given to his books and models; and he produced a great number of such models in plaster of Paris, wax, and clay; some of these specimens of inborn talent are still preserved, and have considerable merit. They were, certainly, promises of that genius which he displayed in after years.

By the time he had arrived at the age of ten years, a great change for the better took place in his constitution. He had been hitherto weak and sickly: long fits of illness had repeatedly interrupted his studies, and he had enjoyed little of the air, and exercise, and active sports, which are so common and so salutary to boys of his age. But now health seemed to come upon him all at once: he grew strong, lively, and active, and the crutches were thrown aside, never to be resumed.

We are told by one of his biographers, that the invigorating excitement of health seemed to fill him with a new spirit, and that for a while he could think of nothing but adventures, such as happened to heroes of romance; and he longed for opportunities of showing his generosity and courage. This feeling was produced by the perusal of Don Quixote.—

He was so much delighted with the amiable, though eccentric hero, (writes one of his biographers,) and his account of the duties and honourable perils of knight-

errantry, that he thought he could not do better than sally forth to right wrongs, and redress grievances. Accordingly, one morning early, unknown to any one, armed with a little French sword, he set out, without a squire, in search of adventures which he could not find. After wandering about Hyde Park the whole day, without meeting enchanter or distressed damsel, he returned home rather ashamed of his romantic flight, and never again sought to emulate the exploits of him of La Mancha, though he always retained a great admiration of his character.

We are told by Allan Cunningham, the clear spirited writer of the lives of the British artists, that, when health and strength came upon him, Flaxman made up his mind to follow sculpture as a profession. He modelled and drew very assiduously: his father's shop was his only academy, and the antique statues which stood there, imparted to him form and proportion: the serenity of sentiment which they presented, accorded with the emotions of his own mind. Hence, it was particularly painful and mortifying to him to have to encounter the shot of ridicule. In a moment of confidence he showed a drawing of a human eye to a friend:—"Is it an oyster?" inquired the other. This joke made a deep impression upon him, and he resolved to exhibit in future with more care and caution his attempts with the modelling tool and the pencil. His confidence in his own natural abilities was not dashed by a few light words, and accordingly he had already resolved to attempt something by which his name might be honourably continued to the world.

When he was about ten years old, his mother died, and upon his father's second marriage, he seems to have been fortunate in a step-mother, who showed herself prudent and kind, consulted her husband's interests, and treated his sons with great tenderness. Mr. Mathew, his friend, now introduced him to his wife, a gifted and agreeable woman, and the companion of Mrs. Montague, Mrs. Chapone, and Mrs. Barbauld. In the company of these distinguished ladies he frequently passed his evenings. He was always a welcome visitor, and heard Mrs. Mathew read Homer and Virgil, and discourse upon sculpture and verse. Here he was encouraged in his study of the dead languages, so necessary to him in his profession: thus he learned to think with the authors, and to embody the ideas of the old Greek poets in such a manner as no modern artist has ever yet exceeded. His mode of education was, consequently, of a desultory character; he gathered his knowledge from many sources; and mastered what he was deficient in by some of those ready methods, which seem to form part of the inspiration of genius.

The talent of the sculptor—that which was inlaid in the mind of Flaxman—consisted in the ready ability to personify or embody the characters and descriptions of poetic fancy. Such of his juvenile productions of Homer as still exist, are marked with the quiet loveliness and serene vigour manifested long afterwards in his famous illustrations of the same poet. He now began to obtain praise, and friends arose to foretell his future eminence.

Flaxman became a student in the Royal Academy when he reached his fifteenth year. His artistical distinction hitherto had been greater with the pencil than with the modelling-tool: he was, at first, a better painter than sculptor. In 1770, he exhibited a wax figure of Neptune; and by the time he was twenty years of age, he had sent only ten pieces to the Academy. His success in pictures was so great during these early years, and before the spirit of sculpture completely overshadowed him,—that one of his productions, in oil-colours,—*Œdipus and Antigone*,—was lately sold by auction for a *Belisarius* of Dominichino. It seems, in many instances, to have been Flaxman's wish to see how his designs looked in colour, before he modelled them. It is the opinion of Wilkie and other distinguished painters, that such was the practice of the old classic artists: they began first to learn to paint, and then to

work in marble; as painters of the present day frequently model figures before they paint them.

He was now known at the Academy, as an industrious and enthusiastic student, and he began to be spoken of as one from whom much was to be expected. In his fifteenth year he gained the silver medal, and he became, in due time, a candidate for the gold one, the reward of the highest merit. The name of the student who was opposed to him was Engleheart. A subject for modelling was given by the council: the students delivered each his specimen; and the prize—the gold medal—was awarded by the President, Sir Joshua Reynolds, to Engleheart.

By the concurrent testimony of his biographers, the subject of this contest is the only unpleasant, inauspicious part of a narrative of the life of Flaxman: "in no other story," says Cunningham, "has conceit ever been coupled with his name." This seems to be true: for he is reported to have felt ever after great humility in regard to his own merits, and to have looked on his disappointment as a fortunate humbling of a spirit puffed up with pride. But still, we feel bound to consider this subject a little further, with reference both to the competitors, and to the adjudicator of the prize.

When Flaxman gave in his model, (we use his own words,) he believed the medal was his own. He had made up his mind that he was to win, and had even invited some friends to cheer themselves at his table till he should return from the Academy with the prize! He determined, he says afterwards, to redouble his exertions, and to put it, if possible, beyond the power of any one, to make mistakes for the future. This alludes to Sir Joshua's decision. His biographers tell us that he thought himself injuriously treated, and that he was incensed at the decision. They then go on to reflect upon the conduct of the president of the Academy, and to accuse him, if not of positive partiality, at least of want of penetration and judgment.

It is the opinion of persons best informed on the subject of education in all its branches, an opinion borne out by the general experience of the world, that a prize, or other scholastic honour, gained in the days of youth, is not necessarily to be taken as the passport of excellence in a man. Such stimulants are useful, as they foster a spirit of industrious excellence. Thus, no one would have known Engleheart, the gainer of the prize, but for the publication of the biography of Flaxman; and all of us have come to know Flaxman, who lost the prize. It might have been, in spite of the biographers, that, at the time, Engleheart surpassed Flaxman; though the latter, by his natural genius and untiring industry, eventually outshone the former. It is only agreeable to human nature, and accordant with self-love, that the adjudication of a prize should leave the unsuccessful discontented, and expose the judge to charges affecting either his head or his heart. There was, perhaps, never a prize awarded in any age or country, where the competitors appeared in the plural number, without raising, and perhaps prolonging, the feelings we have alluded to. All this occurred to our artist between his fifteenth and twentieth year,—a time of life when self-sufficiency is not likely to be corrected by experience.

Soon after this, Flaxman was profitably and agreeably employed in making sketches and models for the pottery of the Wedgewoods. Before this time the porcelain of England had little external beauty to recommend it. The Tuscan vases and the architectural ornaments of Greece, supplied him with the finest shapes: these he embellished with his own inventions; and a taste for elegant forms began to spread over the land. Rude and unseemly shapes were no longer tolerated; the eye grew accustomed to elegance, and desired to have it at the table.

Though he continued at this time to model and sketch for all who employed him, he was by no means as yet

distinguished as a worker in marble: so that, when commissioned, about this time, to make a statue of Alexander the Great in marble, he employed another hand to complete the work.

During the ten years preceding his marriage in 1782, he had exhibited about thirteen works at the Royal Academy, including five portraits in wax or in terra-cotta. The others were models of ancient historical subjects: some were terra-cottas and in relief; others were in plaster of Paris; and one in clay. These seem to show, at least, his early pecuniary difficulties; for, if patronage had smiled upon him, the plaster model would have been converted into marble, and his proficiency herein the sooner attained.

While labouring for Wedgewoods, during these years, he produced his celebrated chess models. Occasionally, when his daily task was over, he would work at the bust of a friend; but it was his chief delight to make designs from the poets, from the Bible, and from the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

We have thus passed through the days of the youth of our artist: we will, in our next paper, enter upon the scenes and productions of his manhood.

TATTOOING.

Few of the practices of semi-barbarous tribes are more striking than the mode of ornamenting their skins. It corresponds with the love of finery and extraneous ornament, which is indulged by polished nations; while the ingenuity of the aboriginal decoration, and the elaborate beauty of its figures, are scarcely reconcilable with the crude notions of savage life.

The process of tattooing merits description. It is generally practised in the Pacific Islands; but none are believed to have carried the art of tattooing to so high a degree of perfection as the natives of the Washington Islands. The operation is performed by certain persons who gain their livelihood by its practice; and those who perform it with the greatest dexterity, and evince the best taste in the choice of ornaments, are as much sought after and encouraged as the best tailors are in civilized countries.

The principal strokes or patterns of the figures to be tattooed are first sketched upon the body, with the same dye that is afterwards rubbed into the punctures or piercings, and to make the latter, they use the wing-bone of a tropical bird, which is jagged and pointed at the end like a comb, and of various forms, according to the required figure. This instrument is fixed into a bamboo handle, about the thickness of the finger, with which the puncturer, by means of another cane, strikes so dexterously, that it only pierces through the skin, to allow the blood and lymph to ooze through the orifices, over which is rubbed a thick dye, composed of ashes from the kernel of the burning nut mixed with water. This, at first, occasions slight smarting and inflammation; it then heals, and after a few days the figure appears in bluish-black lines.

In the Washington Islands, many of the natives seek as much to obtain distinction by the symmetry and regularity with which they are tattooed, as the people of more refined nations do by the elegance of dress; and, although no real elevation of rank is designated by the superiority of these decorations, yet, as only persons of rank can afford expensive or elaborate ornaments, it becomes, in fact, a badge of distinction. As soon as a youth of these islands approaches manhood, the operation is commenced, and this is considered a memorable period of his life. In the first year, only the outlines of the principal figures upon the breast, arms, back, and thighs, are laid: some addition is constantly made to them at intervals of from three to six months, and this is sometimes continued for thirty or forty years before the whole tattooing is completed.

The women of the Washington Islands are very little tattooed, differing in this respect from the inhabitants of the other South Sea Islands. The hands are punctured from the ends of the fingers to the wrists, which produces an appearance like that of gloves; on the feet and ankles the tattooing resembles highly-ornamented half boots; and the arms are decorated with long stripes, and with circlets which have the appearance of bracelets worn by European ladies.

The patterns for the tattooer are selected with great care. They consist of sketches of men, birds, dogs, and various

animals; squares, circles, crescents, angles, diamonds, and, in short, of every variety of form. The head of a man is usually tattooed in every part. The common ornament for the breast is a shield-like figure, and that for the back is a large cross, beginning at the neck: on each side of the calf of the leg is an oval figure. We may add, that the observer can scarcely fail to be struck with the similarity of effect which exists between the tattooed decorations of the South Sea Islanders, and the armour of the warriors of antiquity.

The tattooing of persons in middle life is performed in houses erected for the purpose, and the expense varies with the number and intricacy of the chosen decorations. A common mode of payment is by hogs; but the poor islanders, who have not a superabundance of swine thus to dispose of luxuriously, but themselves live chiefly upon bread-fruit, are tattooed by novices, who take them at a very low price, as subjects for practice; but their works are easily distinguishable from those of an experienced artist. Among the rich islanders, the addition of ear-ornaments to a female, or a bracelet tattooed about her arms, is often the occasion of a joyous feast.

In New Zealand the art of tattooing has been brought to great perfection, and is as much admired as superb clothing. When a chief throws off his mats, he seems as proud of displaying the beautiful ornaments figured on his skin, as any civilized votary of fashion is in displaying himself in his last modish attire. Tattooing is likewise as essential a part of warlike preparations in New Zealand as are the accoutrements of an European soldier. Mr. Earle describes a whole district thus preparing, and an ingenious artist engaged to tattoo the warriors. He was considered by his countrymen a perfect master of his art, and men of the highest rank and importance were accustomed to make long journeys to put their skin under his hands. A highly finished face of a chief, tattooed by this artist, is as greatly prized in New Zealand as a head from the hands of a celebrated painter is among us; and a warrior, having killed a chief whom this artist had tattooed, appreciated the work so highly, that he skinned the chieftain's thighs, and covered his cartouch-box with it.

POISONOUS ARTICLES OF FOOD.

III

POISONOUS HONEY.

HONEY would seem to vary much in its nature and the effects it produces on the animal economy, according to the description of flowers whence it is procured. Delicious in its taste, and usually harmless in its effects, it has been found in various parts of the world to possess poisonous qualities. Mr. Abbot, writing to the Zoological Society from Trebizond, says, that he has there seen the identical symptoms produced by eating the honey, procured by the bees from the odorous *Azalea pontica*, which were described by Xenophon and Diodorus Siculus as affecting those of the army of the Ten Thousand, who ate the honey in the fields during the siege of Trebizond. The persons so affected act just like men inebriated by strong drink. Dr. Barton states, that after the removal of several hives from Pennsylvania to the savannahs of New Jersey, where the *kalmia* was the principal flowering shrub, the bees themselves thrived exceedingly well, but that every one who partook of their honey became as if intoxicated, and seized with dim vision, vertigo, and delirium, followed in a few cases by death. Aristotle, Pliny, and Dioscorides, mention that at certain times of the year, the honey in the neighbourhood of the Caucasus becomes poisonous. Tournefort says, that a constant tradition has prevailed along the coasts of the Black Sea, that the honey collected from the azalea is dangerous; and Guldenstaedt, the companion of Pallas, says the honey thence derived is dark and bitterish, and produces insensibility. Roulox Borro, in his voyage to the Brazils, mentions that the Tapuias make an intoxicating beverage, called *grappe*, from wild honey. Seringe relates, that Swiss herds having eaten of honey procured from the wolfsbar, were convulsed and delirious. M. Augustus de St.-Hilaire gives an interesting account of the escape of himself and com-

panions from the effects of the honey of the Lecheguana wasp, of which they had eaten in the Brazils: he says, there are two species of honey produced by it, one white and harmless, another dark and frequently deleterious.

POISONOUS GRAIN.

WHEAT is sometimes rendered black by disease of the ears, when it is said to cause cholera and other diseases, if made into bread; and the same effects are said to result in various parts of France, when unpropitious weather compels the farmer to cut his wheat before it is entirely ripe: the wheat which is cut in this country before ripening, does not however produce similar effects. Corn has more frequently been rendered hurtful by the accidental admixture with it of some of the seeds of the darnel grass (*Lolium tremulentum*), the only poisonous species of the natural order of the grasses. Several years ago, eighty persons were seized with alarming symptoms in the Sheffield work-house, from having breakfasted upon oatmeal porridge, contaminated by this herb. A similar accident took place at the house of correction at Freyburg.

SPURRED RYE.

RYE has produced the most unquestionable and highly poisonous effects. Triflingly as it enters into the articles of consumption of the people of this country, little is known here practically about the diseases it engenders, but the accounts we have of the various severe epidemics which have prevailed in France and Germany from its use, supply us with abundant information. In its natural state rye furnishes an useful article of food, though of a very inferior nourishing power compared to wheat, but it becomes by disease converted into a blackened substance termed ergot, or spur of rye, which, when used in small quantities, forms a valuable medicine, but when entering into the composition of bread proves a dangerous poison. The production of the ergot or spur of rye (*Secale cornutum*), has been referred to various causes: some suppose it to consist in a diseased state of the juices of the plant; De Candolle believes it caused by the growth of a parasitic mushroom of the genus *Sclerotium*, while the majority of observers assert, that it is the production of an insect. This last opinion has been confirmed by the observations of General Field, of Vermont, who has seen small flies puncturing the ear of the rye, while in a milky state: he imitated the process himself in other instances with a needle, and the black spur was gradually formed.

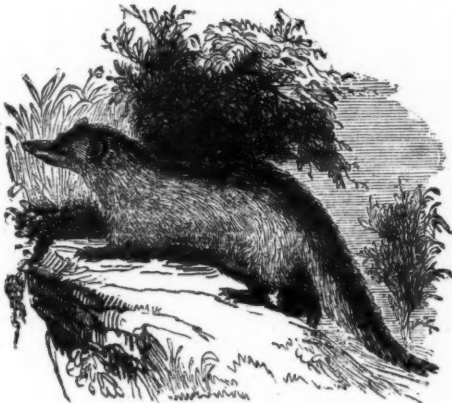
Epidemics arising from the admixture of this spurred with good rye, have occurred at various periods in Europe, and although some of these have been attributed rather to the famines caused by poverty and misery, yet there is ample evidence to show that the rye, on many occasions, has been instrumental in producing them; while direct experiments have at the same time shown its poisonous effects upon the lower animals. From the symptoms which the imperfect records of the time detail, it is very probable that many of the epidemic visitations of the tenth and eleventh centuries, known in France under the names of St. Anthony's Fire, the Sacred Fire, and the "Mal des Ardens," were produced by this grain; but the earliest positive accounts we have, relate to an epidemic which occurred in 1596, in Saxony. There are numerous records of similar occurrences from time to time, during and after the seventeenth century, in France, Siberia, Denmark, Sweden, and Lombardy, and in 1661 the disease appeared in England. Towards the end of last century, in consequence of the investigations which the various states instituted into the subject, and of the improved conditions of the lower orders, the epidemic attacks of Ergotisme (as it is called by the French) became much less frequent and less severe, yet have several visitations occurred even during the present century in France and Germany. The rye chiefly becomes spurred in wet seasons, and in moist clayey soils,

and thus the district of Sologne, situated between the rivers Loire and Cher, is found to be the portion of France by far the most frequently affected. The Abbé Tessier, who in 1777 made a careful investigation of the subject, found that a forty-eighth part of the thrashed corn was ergotized, and that in bad seasons the proportion mounted up to one-third or one-fourth of the whole quantity. Similar observations as to the localities favourable to its production have been made in Germany, and Wildenow says, this diseased state of the rye may at any time be induced by sowing the corn in rich damp soil, and watering the plants profusely in warm weather.

It is not our intention to describe minutely the symptoms which result from the use of spurred rye, but we may notice the curious fact that they vary so much in different epidemics, that the French writers denote them under two distinctive appellations, namely, Convulsive Ergotism, and Gangrenous Ergotism,—in the first, a great disposition to convulsive and spasmodic diseases manifests itself; in the latter, various parts of the bodies of those who eat the bread containing the damaged rye, are destroyed by gangrene or mortification, from which cause these unhappy victims frequently lose a hand, a foot, or the nose. In Germany, the disease is popularly termed “the creeping sickness.”

Maize or Indian corn is said to be liable to a similar disease in Columbia, and while in that state, produces a loss of hair and teeth of those who partake of it.—J. C.

THE ICHNEUMON.



THE little animal we are about to describe was well known to the ancients, and much celebrated in their fables. It was held in such high estimation by the Egyptians that funds were set apart for its support; it was tended with great solicitude, and fish, bread, and milk were supplied to it as food. It was also a forbidden thing to kill it; and, on its death, honours were paid to it, as to an object of worship. Elian, and other ancient writers, celebrate the combats of the ichneumon and the aspis: Pliny describes its stratagems against the crocodile, and it is on account of the reputation it has for diminishing the numbers of these formidable creatures, that the ichneumon has gained so much celebrity. According to the statements of the above writers, the ichneumon had the sagacity to arm itself, previous to the battle, with a coating of mud. If mud were not at hand, it bathed itself in water, and then rolled itself in the sand, and as the nostrils were the most vulnerable part, it took care to cover them by the sinuosities of its tail. Aristotle still further vaunts the wisdom of the ichneumon by stating that it never goes to battle without first summoning its friends and allies. Pliny relates the stratagem it employs against the aspis as we give it from *Holland*:—

Now when he is lulled as it were fast asleep with this pleasure and contentment of his, the rat of India, or ichneu-

mon, spieth his advantage, and seeing him lie thus broad gaping, whippeth into his mouth, and shooteth himself downe his throat as quicke as an arrow, and then gnaweth his bowels, eateth a hole through his body and so killeth him.

It is difficult to account for the above extravagant notions of this animal, for there is nothing in its character or habits, as at present described by naturalists, that can warrant them. The ichneumon is diminutive in size, timid in disposition, and has neither the courage nor the power to attack serpents or crocodiles, whether they be asleep or awake. It is fond of mice, rats, small birds, &c., and is particularly destructive to eggs. In this way it is of great service; for by feeding on the eggs of crocodiles, serpents, and the larger kind of lizards, it reduces the numbers of these formidable creatures. At the close of day, it glides through the ridges and inequalities of the soil, and shows much prudence in searching after its prey, and in endeavouring at the same time to evade danger. It possesses great perseverance, and will remain for hours in the same place, attentively watching for the animal it has marked out as its prey. When it has made its way into some unknown spot it immediately explores every hole and corner, and its chief power of research seems to lie in its sense of smell, which is uncommonly powerful and acute; the other senses appear comparatively feeble. Cuvier thus notices the animal, which he places with the civets, and the genets, intermediate between foxes and hyænas in the system.

The mangouste of Egypt, so celebrated under the name ichneumon, (*Viverra ichneumon*, Linn.)

Grey, with a long tail terminated by a black tuft, larger than our cats, as slender as our martens. It searches peculiarly for the eggs of crocodiles, but also subsists on all kinds of small animals. Domesticated in houses, it hunts mice, reptiles, &c. The Europeans at Cairo call it *Pharaoh's rat*; the people of the country, *Nems*. What the ancients related of its jumping down the throat of the crocodile to put it to death is fabulous.

Hasselquist, speaking of the ichneumon of the Nile, says that it is met with in Upper and Lower Egypt living during the inundations of the Nile in gardens and near the villages, but in the dry season dwelling in the fields and near the banks of the river. It creeps slowly along, as if ready to seize its prey, and feeds on plants, eggs, and fowls, killing the latter in the night, when it frequents the villages. He mentions likewise its services in Upper Egypt in searching out the crocodiles' eggs that lie hid in the sand, and devouring them.

The execution committed by the ichneumon among young animals may be judged of by the fact, that when a dozen full-grown rats were turned into a room in the Tower of London, sixteen feet square, with one of these animals, the ichneumon killed them all in less than a minute and a half.

The haunts and habits of the members of this subgenus are nearly all alike. Wherever they abound, the country is subject to periodical overflows of water, and a consequent abundance of aquatic animals; so that the office of the ichneumon in the economy of nature seems to be the keeping of such animals within due bounds by preying on their eggs. From M. F. Cuvier we have a description of an ichneumon, brought from the peninsula of Malacca, and from Dr. Horsfield an account of the ichneumon of Java. Of these two species, therefore, we proceed to give a brief notice.

The mangouste, or ichneumon of Malacca, is rather more than a foot in length, the tail about a foot, and the height at the most elevated point of the back five inches and a half. Owing to a peculiar faculty which it possesses of elongating or shortening the body by some inches, it is a difficult matter to measure it correctly. The colour of this animal is a dirty grey, resulting from a succession of black and whitish yellow rings which cover the hairs; the circumference of the eye, the ear

and the extremity of the muzzle are naked, and of a violet colour; the tail is the same colour as the body, very thick at the root, and terminating in a point with yellowish hairs. This ichneumon, though extremely tame, permitting itself to be handled, and taking pleasure in caresses, grew extremely ferocious at sight of those little animals which constitute its prey. It was particularly fond of birds, and when they were put into a large cage, it would spring forward with a rapidity that the eye could not follow, seize them, break their heads, and then devour them with the utmost voracity; as soon as its appetite was satisfied, it would lie down in the most obscure corner of its retreat. When irritated the hairs of its tail would bristle up. Its cleanliness was remarkable.

These little animals are said to inhabit holes in the walls, or burrows in the vicinity of habitations, and to perform much the same part in India that weasels and polecats do among ourselves, destroying great numbers of young animals and committing much devastation.

The mangouste, or ichneumon of Java, differs but slightly from that of Malacca. It is somewhat larger, and its fur is a mixture of black and brown instead of black and white. It is known in Java by the name of garangan, and is found there most abundantly in the large teak forests; its agility is greatly admired by the natives; it is reported among them that it will attack and kill serpents, and that when the snake involves it in its folds the ichneumon inflates its body to a considerable degree, and when the reptile is about to bite, again contracts, slips from between the folds, and seizes the snake by the neck.

It is very expert in burrowing in the ground, which process it employs ingeniously in the pursuit of rats: it possesses great natural sagacity, and from the peculiarities of its character willingly seeks the protection of man: it is easily tamed, and in a domestic state is docile, becomes attached to its master, and follows him like a dog; it frequently places itself erect on its hind legs, regarding every thing which passes with the greatest attention; it is of a very restless disposition, and always carries its food to a very retired place in order to consume it, and if it is disturbed there, it exhibits great anger. One of the principal articles of food among the Javanese is the common fowl; and as the ichneumon is very artful in surprising and catching young chickens, it is not to the interest of the people to keep it in the domestic state. They are likewise very fond of cats, and are unwilling in most cases to be deprived of their society for the sake of introducing the ichneumon.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

THE bird may leave its nestled young,
The sun may cease to shine above,
Man may forget his native tongue,
But who can change a mother's love!

The flowerets may withhold their bloom,
And gentleness forsake the dove;
Man may forget the blighting tomb,
But changeless is a mother's love.

EVERY one admits that the mind, and moral faculties, are to be developed and strengthened, and made to do the best, by exercise. This is equally true of physical power. Every action which it can be proper to do at all, ought to be done in the best way; otherwise the end of being is not answered. In the vegetable and animal departments, all proper care and cultivation tend to use and beauty. Is there any reason why the physical powers of man should not have care and cultivation to the same ends? Those who prefer a stooping, lounging, awkward, graceless, figure and motion, may be on one side of the question; those who think that it was intended that man should be an upright, easy, frank, comely, and convenient being to himself, and pleasant to all within whose observation he may come, will be on the other.—S.

USE OF TEA IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

THE plants employed as tea in different countries do not resemble each other so much as their general denomination might lead the reader to imagine. Their external varieties are, however, exceeded by the modes of making beverage from them: for, it is curious to observe, that in scarcely any two countries where tea is drunk, is it prepared precisely in the same manner. That of China approaches nearest to the fashion of our own country.

The Emperor Kien-long, the royal poet of China, composed an ode eulogising tea. He first describes the mode of drawing tea, which, when divested of his peculiar and methodical phraseology, is nearly the same as our own. "On a slow fire," he says, "set a tripod, whose colour and texture show its long use. Fill it with clear snow water. Boil it as long as would be sufficient to turn fish white and crayfish red. Throw it upon the delicate leaves of choice tea. Let it remain as long as the vapour rises in a cloud, and leaves only a thin mist floating on the surface. At your ease drink this precious liquor, which will chase away the five causes of sorrow. We can taste and feel, but not describe the state of repose produced by a liquor thus prepared." The Chinese, however, drink their tea simply, without the addition of sugar or milk. The common people, who have a coarser tea, boil it for some time in water, and make use of the liquor for usual drink. Early in the morning the kettle, filled with water, is regularly hung over the fire for this purpose, and the tea is either put into the kettle, inclosed in a bag, or by means of a basket pressed to the bottom of the vessel, that there may not be any hindrance in drawing off the water. The Bantsjaa tea only is used in this manner; its virtues, being more fixed, would not be so fully extracted by infusion.

One mode of using tea, among the higher ranks in China, is by grating into the cup, balls made of the most valuable leaves, cemented together by some kind of tasteless gum.

Neither the Chinese, nor natives of Japan, ever use tea before it has been kept at least a year; because, when fresh, it is said to prove narcotic, and to disorder the senses. The Japanese reduce the tea into a fine powder, by grinding the leaves in a handmill; they then mix them with hot water into a thin pulp, in which form it is sipped, especially by the nobility and wealthy persons. It is made and served up to company in the following manner:—the tea-table furniture, with the powdered tea inclosed in a box, are set before the company; the cups are then filled with hot water, and a small quantity of the powder is taken out of the box, put into each cup, and then stirred together with a curious notched instrument till the liquor foams, in which state it is handed to the company, and sipped while warm. Du Halde states this method to be used in some provinces of China, as well as in Japan. To make tea, and to serve it in a genteel and graceful manner, is an accomplishment, in which persons of both sexes in Japan are instructed by masters, in the same manner as Europeans are in dancing, and other branches of polite education.

Tea is also the common beverage of all the labouring people in China, one scarcely ever sees them represented at work of any kind, but the tea-pot and tea-cup appear as their accompaniments. Reapers, threshers, and all who work out of, as well as within, doors, have their attendants. In public roads, and in all places of much resort in Japan, and even in the midst of fields and frequented woods, tea-booths are erected; as most travellers drink scarcely any other beverage on the road.

The tea drunk by the working people in China, however, must not only be of an inferior class, but very weak; as the native attendants on Lord Macartney's embassy were continually begging the refuse leaves, which had been already used by the English, so that they might pour fresh water over them, and thus obtain

a better beverage than they usually enjoyed. On the other hand, some tea presented by the Emperor Kien Long to Lord Macartney, was found to want somewhat of the astringency which the British tea-drinker values in the infusion.

Thrice at least in the day, every Chinese drinks tea, but all who possess the means enjoy the refreshing beverage oftener: it is a constant offering to a guest, and forms a portion of every sacrifice to their idols.

Mr. Ellis, in an account of one of Lord Amherst's visits of ceremony to Kwang, a mandarin of high rank, says, "The tea served round was that only used on occasions of ceremony, called Yu-tien: it was a small leaved highly-flavoured green tea. In Lord Amherst's and Kwang's cups there was a thin perforated silver plate, to keep the leaves down, and let the infusion pass through. The cups used by the mandarins of rank, in form, resemble coffee cups, and are placed in a wooden or metal saucer, shaped like the Chinese boats."

Tea has long been common in SOUTH AMERICA, and is grown in large quantities in Paraguay, the tree called Yerva Mate, being nearly peculiar to that district. We find, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, that this plant was in general use; and there can be no doubt but the Indians taught it to the Paraguayans. The quantity used by a person who is fond of this tea is an ounce. In Paraguay, La Plata, Peru, and Quito, it is made at all hours of the day, by putting a handful into a tea-pot, from the spout of which, the hot liquid is drunk; some mix sugar with it, and others add a few drops of lemon-juice. Five millions of pounds are annually obtained from Paraguay, half of which is sent to Chili, whence Lima and Quito are supplied: the rest is consumed in the viceroyalty of Buenos Ayres. The people of South America attribute innumerable virtues to this plant: it is certainly aperient and diuretic; but the other qualities ascribed to it are doubtful. Like opium, it produces some singular and opposite effects; it gives sleep to the restless, and spirit to the torpid. Those who have once contracted the habit of drinking it, do not find it easy to discontinue its use, or even to drink it in moderation; though when taken to excess, it brings on similar disorders to those which are produced by the immoderate use of strong liquor.

Dr. Walsh, in his *Notices of Brazil*, describes what is by some considered another plant, named the conhunga, which is used universally as tea. It grows in marshy places, and resembles an orange tree: the leaves are dried, or rather, roasted on twigs before the fire, where they crackle like cannell, and are then reduced nearly to powder, and kept in pots. Dr. Walsh drank this tea prepared in three different ways: either an infusion of fresh leaves, or made with the dried leaves like China tea, or boiled with sugar, and then drained off. The clear infusion resembles that of common green-tea, but has neither its flavour, odour, nor refreshing qualities.

Brick tea is much used by the Mongols, and most of the people of Middle Asia: it serves them both for food and drink. The Chinese carry on a great trade in this kind of tea, but never drink it themselves. It consists of the dry, dirty, and rejected leaves and stalks of the tea, which are mixed with a glutinous substance, pressed into moulds, and dried in ovens: these blocks being called, on account of their shape, brick tea. The mode of using it is, to pound a piece in a mortar made for the purpose, and throw the powder into a cast-iron vessel full of boiling water, which is suffered to stand a long time over the fire, during which salt and milk, and sometimes flour fried in oil, are added. This tea, or broth, is called Satouran, and is believed to be very nourishing.

Throughout the continent of Europe, tea is comparatively but little used, coffee being the almost universal beverage as a luxury, or necessary of life. In Germany, tea is so seldom drank, that it acts like a medicine when

taken by a native; and, in that country, persons have been known to decline a cup of good bohea, with the excuse, "No, I thank you; I am quite well at present." In Bavaria, it is the practice to flavour the tea with a few slices of lemon, so that it resembles bad lemonade. Even in France, the making of tea is but ill understood or managed; and in Great Britain only, in Europe, can this beverage be drunk in perfection. Nevertheless the tea purchased on the Continent is, generally speaking, both good and cheap. The Russians are fastidious in tea-making and tea-drinking, and understand both arts fully as well as, if not better than, the English. Their tea-urn is quite a piece of machinery. The perfume and stimulant qualities of their best sort of tea is said to have a distressing effect upon the nerves. The teas used in St. Petersburg, reach that market direct from China overland; and it is presumed that from the circumstance of its not travelling by sea, the Russian tea retains all its bloom and strength, which the English tea loses during a long sea-voyage; but this does not appear probable.

The mode of making tea in England is too well known to need description; but a few notices of its introduction may be more acceptable. From a single sheet found in Sir Hans Sloane's Library, in the British Museum, it appears that tea was known in England, in the year 1657, though not then in general use. The writer of this paper says, "that the virtues and excellencies of this leaf and drink are many and great, is evident and manifest by the high esteem and use of it, (especially of late years,) among the physicians and knowing men in France, Italy, Holland, and other parts of Christendom; and, in England, it hath been sold in the leaf for six pounds, and sometimes for ten pounds the pound weight; and in respect of its former scarceness and dearness, it hath been only used as a regalia in high treatments and entertainments, and presents made thereof to princes and grandees, till the year 1657."

Mr Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty, in his *Diary*, makes the following entry: "Sept. 25, 1660. I did send for a cup of tea (a China drink,) of which I never had drunk before, and went away;" but the writer does not say where he had his drink. In 1662, tea appears in an advertisement of a coffee house, in Exchange Alley; which refutes the commonly received statement that it was first brought into this country from Holland, by Lord Arlington, in the year 1666. In a letter from Mr. Henry Savill, from Paris, dated August 12, 1678, the writer refers to "friends who call for tea, instead of pipes and bottles after dinner; a base unworthy Indian practice, (adds he,) the truth is, all nations have grown so wicked as to have some of their filthy customs."

In 1678, the year in which the above letter is dated, the East India Company began the importation of tea as a branch of trade, the quantity received at that time amounting to 4713 pounds. The trade did not, however, considerably increase during the early part of the eighteenth century, for the importation between the years 1700 and 1710, amounted to less than 800,000 pounds. It was still a scarce luxury, confined to the wealthy: it was made in small pots of the most costly China, holding not more than half a pint, and drunk out of cups, which held little more than a table-spoon. In the century between 1710 and 1810, the teas imported into this country, amounted to upwards of 750,000,000 pounds; between 1810 and 1828, the total importation exceeded 427,000,000 pounds, averaging 23,000,000 and 24,000,000 a year; and, in 1831, the quantity imported was 26,043,223 pounds.

The uses of tea, as a beverage, were at first so little understood in England, that instances are related of the herb having been served at table as a vegetable, with a sauce of melted butter, the water in which it was boiled being thrown away as useless.

The beneficial results of the introduction of tea and coffee, have been strangely overlooked or underrated. It has been, however, well described as leading "to the most wonderful change that ever took place in the diet of modern civilized nations,—a change highly important both in a moral and physical point of view. These beverages have the admirable advantage of affording stimulus without producing intoxication, or any of its evil consequences. Lovers of tea and coffee are, in fact, rarely drinkers; and hence the use of these beverages has benefited both manners and morals*."

* MACCULLOCH, in *Dict. Commerce*.

CHINESE FUNERALS.

THE funeral ceremonies of the Chinese have many interesting peculiarities, which are highly descriptive of the manners and customs of this extraordinary people. They keep dead bodies above ground for a very long time: the rich delay the funeral even for a year, or longer, the time denoting their degree of respect and reverence for the deceased. When the body lies in state, it is placed in the largest room of the house, entirely hung round with white, which is the Chinese colour for mourning. The coffin is ornamented with painting and gilding, and is made during the life-time of the deceased: indeed it is the practice of the poorest Chinese to reserve a sufficient sum to secure a reputable shelter for their lifeless bodies.

On the day of the funeral the relations walk in procession to the grave. The corpse is preceded by musicians, playing melancholy airs upon various instruments, and by persons bearing painted scrolls and silken banners, on which are inscriptions indicative of the rank and character of the deceased. Incense-bearers follow these; and then, under a white canopy, the coffin, covered with a white pall, is borne by men. Upon each side of it are persons employed in burning pieces of paper and pasteboard, with inscriptions upon them: some are circular, and some are cut into fantastic figures, all which, it is believed, are wafted upwards with the soul, and accompany it in its next state of existence, either as coin, bread, or whatever else the inscription denotes. After the corpse come the relatives of the deceased, in white clothes, which are soiled, dirty, and unornamented; or, the eldest son, wearing a canvass frock, having his body bent, and leaning on a staff, follows near the coffin; behind him are his brothers, in couples, leaning on crutches, as if unable to support themselves. In some funerals, every mourner has a friend, or supporter, on each side, and a servant bearing over him a huge umbrella with a deep white fringe, which nearly screens the mourner from the public gaze. If women follow, they are borne in small coaches similar to our sedans. The procession is closed by the friends of the deceased. The mourners often howl and shriek most vehemently, and fill the air with their loud lamentations.

The burial-places are erected in the usual shape of grottoes, without the towns. They are divided into small cells, in each of which a coffin is laid, and as soon as the cells are filled, the sepulchre is closed. No religious service takes place; the coffin is deposited in its receptacle with great solemnity, and the procession returns. At a short distance from the tomb are halls, where tables are spread with provisions for the mourners and attendants. If the deceased were a grandee of the empire, his relations do not leave the tomb for a month or two, but reside in apartments prepared for them, and renew their respects to the dead daily. The magnificence of these funerals, of course, varies with the rank of the deceased. That of one of the emperor's brothers was attended by upwards of sixteen thousand persons.

Distinguished persons are generally buried in mountains and solitary places; and if the tomb be erected in a valley or plain, a large heap of earth is raised over it and covered with white plaster. In the vault, an altar is built, whereon are placed meats, incense, lighted tapers, and figures of slaves and animals, which are believed to be of service to the dead in another world.

If the deceased held any important office, his most virtuous actions are sculptured on marble and fixed up in front of the tomb, about which also are ranged figures of officers, eunuchs, horses, stags, camels, lions, and elephants. About the tomb are planted cypress-trees, which add to the solemnity and gloom of the scene.

Other means, beside the erection of tombs, are taken to

perpetuate the virtues of the great. Each family of respectability has erected on its estate a large building called the *Hall of Ancestors*, against the wall of which is placed a table which bears the figures of the most distinguished ancestors; or the names of the family, with their ages and dignities, are merely inscribed on tablets.

The Chinese have likewise periodical ceremonies to cherish the memory of the dead. In spring, the relations assemble at the family hall, where the wealthiest of them prepare a banquet; but none of the viands are touched till an offering has been made with due solemnity. The poorer classes, who have no hall wherein to honour their ancestors, place the names of the deceased in the most frequented part of their houses.

The Chinese likewise consider it an imperious duty to visit the tombs of their ancestors once or twice a-year, when they pluck away the weeds from about the grave, and place wine and provisions upon the tomb, whilst others freshen, with paints of different colours, the characters of the epitaphs.

No corpse is allowed to enter the gates of Peking without an imperial order, because it is said a rebel entered in a coffin in the reign of Kienlung. However, even at Canton, and in all other cities of the empire, no corpse is permitted to enter the southern gate, because the emperor of China ascends his throne with his face towards the south.

THE SMOKE-JACK AND THE SMOKE, A FABLE.

THERE was a nobleman who had much money and built a fine house, and, being fond of company, he made a large kitchen, which was fitted up with a spacious fire-place, an excellent smoke-jack, and every thing else that could tend to make the department perfect. Dinner parties followed in quick succession, and the feasting gave universal satisfaction. Each day as the spits were taken from the fire, the praises and mutual congratulations of the cooks, at the admirable roasting of the joints, ascended in grateful accents to the ears of the smoke-jack; and as it so happened that the kitchen chimney passed up the wall of the dining-room, the pleasing strain was continued by the approbation overheard from the guests as each haunch of venison, or sirloin of beef, or Norfolk turkey, graced the table. Praises often repeated will make the best of us giddy, and the heads of smoke jacks have proverbially a tendency to turn round! so was the result with the jack, the hero of this fable. Elated by the applauses which greeted him, he exclaimed with impassioned energy, "How great is my influence and how extensive my powers of pleasing! not only do I excite the admiration of the menials below, but I enable my noble master to exercise his hospitality and call forth the lavish commendations of the illustrious friends who throng his table! mine would be a great and enviable position were it not for this filthy smoke, which is constantly puffing in my face and covering me with blacks and soot! I will allow it no longer; therefore, smoke! I warn you off my premises immediately."

The poor smoke, checked by this repulse, meekly changed his current and curling up the opposite side of the chimney was soon lost among the clouds and vapours of the sky. For the next day a large dinner party was invited, but who can describe the consternation of the poor cooks when preparing for the feast, they found the smoke-jack immovable! jerking, poking, shaking, oiling, proved alike in vain. My lord was complained to, a smith was summoned, and the jack, being pronounced useless, was quickly taken down and sold for old iron.

But even iron, old and rusty though it be, may yield a moral for our use; it may teach the rich and great, that their power, however vast, is not independent of the humbler beings by whom they are surrounded. They may dread contamination and renounce their fellowship, but if the working current of the poor be withdrawn, the power of the rich, must, like the smoke-jack, stop, and lacking means to call it into action, its influence must cease. This reflection may excite a sense of pride in the poor man's mind, but let him not forget, that when the smoke had quitted the alliance and the guidance of the jack, he was left to follow a course through which impurity marked his progress to an unprofitable end.

LONDON:

JOHN WILLIAM PARKER, WEST STRAND.

PUBLISHED IN WEEKLY NUMBERS, PRICE ONE PENNY, AND IN MONTHLY PARTS, PRICE SIXPENCE.

Sold by all Booksellers and News-vendors in the Kingdom.